Remarks

The above Amendments and these Remarks are in reply to the Final Office Action mailed May 29, 2008.

I.   Summary of Examiner's Rejections

Prior to the Final Office Action mailed May 29, 2008, Claims 1-6 and 21-34 were pending in the Application. In the Office Action, Claims 1-6 and 21-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention. Claims 1-6 and 21-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being anticipated by Sarkar et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,754,659) in view of Nicholson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,631,519), and further in view of Flores et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,734,837).

II.   Summary of Applicants' Amendment

The present Response amends Claims 1, 23 and 30, and adds new Claim 35, leaving for the Examiner's present consideration Claims 1-6 and 21-35. Reconsideration of the Application, as amended, is respectfully requested. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to prosecute any originally presented or canceled claims in a continuing or future application.

III.   Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112

In the Final Office Action mailed May 29, 2008, Claims 1-6 and 21-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention. More specifically, per claims 1, 23 and 30, the meaning of the limitation "the catalog is employed to invoke the plurality of heterogeneous applications from within a business process" was rejected as being unclear.

The present Response hereby amends Claims 1, 23 and 30 so as to more clearly define the embodiment therein. Applicants respectfully submit that as amended, Claims 1-6, and 21-34 comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

IV. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In the Final Office Action mailed May 29, 2008, Claims 1-6 and 21-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being anticipated by Sarkar et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,754,659, hereinafter Sarkar) in view of Nicholson et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,631,519, hereinafter Nicholson), and further in view of Flores et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,734,837, hereinafter Flores).

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly define the embodiment therein. As amended, Claim 1 defines:

> *1. A system for designing a business process, said system comprising:*
>
> *an introspection module that generates a catalog of generic components by introspecting a set of exposed application programming interfaces (APIs) of a plurality of heterogeneous applications created in different programming languages and transforming a plurality of implementation-specific components of said heterogeneous applications into the generic components of said catalog wherein the catalog contains generic components which, when invoked, are bound to the implementation-specific components of said applications upon execution of the business process;*
>
> *a component manager coupled to the introspection module and operable to manage said catalog generated by the introspection module by defining and organizing the generic components in said catalog; and*
>
> *a process designer coupled to the component manager and operable to:*
>
> > *select at least one of the generic components from said catalog managed by the component manager; and*
> >
> > *graphically construct a business process definition that includes a series of graphically represented activities linked by one or more transitions wherein at least one activity of said business process definition invokes the selected generic component from said catalog;*
>
> *a repository for storing the business process definition; and*
>
> *one or more process engines that execute said business process definition to instantiate a business process instance, wherein the business process instance interacts with the plurality of heterogeneous applications by invoking the generic components in said catalog and wherein the business process instance integrates the plurality of heterogeneous applications into a single process by invoking services from the plurality of heterogeneous applications during execution of the activities of said process.*

As amended, Claim 1 defines a business process management (BPM) system that integrates multiple heterogeneous backend applications of an organization into a single process. The backend applications are introspected and a catalog is constructed. The catalog contains generic component wrappers. Whenever these generic components are invoked during a business process execution, they are bound to the particular backend application. This allows one business process to invoke multiple different applications created in different programming languages and technologies. Thus, all of the backend and legacy applications of an enterprise can be integrated into a single process.

The Sarkar reference teaches a method for running existing Java beans in an Enterprise Java Bean Environment. More specifically, Sarkar appears to disclose a system for running application code originally developed as simple Java beans in an EJB environment (Abstract). This is performed by defining an EJB and generating EJB support code that performs the functionality of the simple Java beans.

The Nicholson reference teaches an automated schema and interface generation. More specifically, Nicholson was cited as disclosing the automatic generation of interface definitions for reducing inconsistent interface and data model definitions.

However, Applicants respectfully submit that Sarkar in combination with Nicholson fail to disclose or render obvious the features of Claim 1, as amended.

Firstly, Sarkar and Nicholson fail to disclose any catalog that contains generic components, which when invoked, are bound to the implementation-specific components of said applications upon execution of the business process, as defined in amended Claim 1. In the Office Action, it was proposed that the claims did not limit the definition of catalog and that the EJB container is considered to be the catalog in Sarkar (Office Action, page 10). In response, the present Reply amends Claim 1 to more specifically define that the catalog contains generic components which are invoked by the business process and when these generic components are invoked, they are bound to the implementation-specific components of the different applications. The standard EJB container disclosed in Sarkar does not perform such functionality.

Secondly, Sarkar and Nicholson fail to disclose that the business process instance *integrates the plurality of heterogeneous applications into a single process* by invoking services from the plurality of heterogeneous applications, as defined in Claim 1. In the Office Action, it was proposed that:

"In response, Sarkar discloses a single generic EJB's business method to integrate the one or more original code without modification by using Java introspection (i.e. col. 5, lines 47-55; col. 4, lines 28-42). Nicholson teaches interoperating with a heterogeneous environment having diverse applications in different programming languages by automatically generating interface definitions for reducing inconsistent interface and data model definitions in a complex workflow project (col. 2, lines 5-11; col. 8, lines 48-67). Therefore Sarkar in view of Nicholson teaches that the catalog is employed to invoke the plurality of heterogeneous applications by using the generic EJB container." (Office Action page 10).

Applicants respectfully disagree. Specifically, the cited portions of the references do not mention a process instance that integrates the <u>plurality of heterogeneous applications into a single process</u> by invoking services from the plurality of heterogeneous applications, as defined in Claim 1. There is no disclosure of multiple applications being integrated into a single process, as defined in Claim 1. Further, there is no disclosure of any single process instance that invokes services in multiple different applications.

Instead, Sarkar merely teaches Java introspection used to run simple Java beans as EJBs. Nicholson, on the other hand, teaches automatically generating interface definitions for reducing inconsistent interface and model definitions. However, neither reference describes a single process instance that integrates multiple different backend applications into a single process, as defined in Claim 1.

In view of the above comments and amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1, as amended, is neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 23 and 30

Claims 23 and 30, while independently patentable, recite limitations that, similarly to those described above with respect to Claim 1, are not taught, suggested nor otherwise rendered obvious by the cited references. Reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-6, 21-22 and 24-29

Claims 2-6, 21-22 and 24-29 are not addressed separately, but it is respectfully submitted that these claims are allowable as depending from an allowable independent claim, and further in view of the comments provided above. Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 2-6, 21-22

and 24-29 are similarly neither anticipated by, nor obvious in view of the cited references, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

It is also submitted that these claims also add their own limitations which render them patentable in their own right. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to argue these limitations should it become necessary in the future.

V.   Additional Amendments

The present Response hereby adds new dependent Claim 35. Applicants respectfully submit that new Claim 35 is fully supported by the Specification as originally filed and that no new matter is being added. Consideration thereof is respectfully requested.

VI.   Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now pending in the subject patent application should be allowable, and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested. The Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned if he can assist in any way in expediting issuance of a patent.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any underpayment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 06-1325 for any matter in connection with this response, including any fee for extension of time, which may be required.

Respectfully submitted,

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